Good News for Homemakers

On microwave cookery

By SHIRLEY W. WALTON
Extension Agent

Cooking meat in microwave ovens can be quick and easy, but there are some tricks to remember for a sure fire delicious meal.

Meat and other protein foods get tough when cooked too fast. The more tender cuts of meat, such as rib and T-bone steaks or rib roasts, can still be done quite successfully with fast microwave cooking. Brown steaks in a skillet, broiler or on a grill before microwave cooking. They can also be browned in a special dish during the cooking time in the microwave.

Meat glazes, such as honey soy glaze or barbeque sauce, can also add brown color to the outside of cooked meat. It is also possible to start the meat in a microwave and finish up the browning in a conventional oven.

The less tender cuts of meat need long, slow simmering even in the microwave oven. Use a lower power setting or turn off the oven at intervals and let the meat stand. Time savings are not significant when cooking less tender cuts of meat on low power. It will take about the same time as conventional broiling or oven simmering. Adding sauces or other liquids helps the meat cook more slowly without drying out. Remember, when preparing less tender cuts of meat, a tomato sauce is a great tenderizer. The acid in the tomatoes aids in tenderizing the meat and also enhances the flavor.

When microwaving the meat, rotate whatever cut you are preparing a quarter of a turn two or three times during the cooking process. This helps a thick roast to more evenly cook and this should also be done with steaks.

Meat will continue to cook in the microwave even after it is turned off, so remember to turn the oven off before the meat is completely done. Turn it off about 10 minutes early for chicken and meat loaf, 1 to 3 minutes early for bacon and about 15 minutes early for large roasts, turkeys or hams.

Precooked meat such as wieners and sausages cook easily in the microwave because they only need to be heated through. Bacon is also quick to fix in a microwave, especially if it's covered with a paper towel while cooking. The towel catches the grease so there's no clean up from spatters after the bacon is done.

If you have questions about preparing foods in a microwave, refer to your use care manual or if you should have a problem or a question that you cannot locate in your use care manual, please call our office.

Some of you have mentioned that you are interested in a mini-work session on how to use a microwave oven effectively. Our office is prepared to offer such a mini-session, which will probably be a two-hour session in the afternoon and a two-hour session in the evening, so that it would be convenient for persons who work. If you would like to participate in such a workshop, call 352-8244 or write us at P.O. Box 489, Appomattox, VA 24522. We are in the process of planning this type of educational opportunity.

If you should have a homemaking question or problem, you may also contact us at the above phone number and address. It is always a pleasure to hear from you and to help you.

Have a good week!

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Eva's Spoon Burgers

2 medium onions, chopped
1 cup celery, tops or stalks, chopped finely
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
2 lbs. ground beef
1 cup milk
1 teaspoon garlic salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
4 tablespoons worcestershire sauce
1½ cups tomato catsup
1 teaspoon salt

Cook onions and celery in margarine or butter until tender. Brown the ground beef and drian off fat. Mix onion-clery mixture, beef and all other ingredients in a saucepan. Cook slowly until flavors have thoroughly blended.

This is a delicious spoon burger which can be put on buns. Try something different and serve them on French bread or in hot dog buns.

Because of many requests, this recipe is being printed again for your convenience. Many thanks to Mrs. Eva Mayberry for sharing this delightful and delicious recipe with us. This is a good budget stretcher for the family.

Happiness is 4-H

By FRANK SWEET

The Appomattox County 4-H Public Speaking Contest will be held on Thursday, February 17, beginning at 7 p.m. at Appomattox Elementary School. Young people throughout Appomattox have been practicing and preparing their speeches over the past several weeks. Ribbons and trophy awards are provided by Farmers National Bank for the public speaking participants.

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Strawberry plant orders will be accepted until Feb. 10 in the Extension Office. Four varieties of strawberries are being offered this year: Sunrise, Surecrop, Scott and Delite. Order forms have been distributed to 4-H members and are available from the Extension Office in Appomattox. Planting instructions and guidelines for taking care of the plants will be provided.

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Appomattox 4-H'ers will again have the opportunity to plant annual wildlife feed patches this year. For a number of years in the past, this annual feed patch seed, consisting of millet, milo and soybeans, was provided by the Virginia Game Commission. About three years ago, the Game Commission stopped providing the annual feed patch seed. This spring 4-H and FFA will purchase quantities of sunflower, millet and grain sorghum and provide packages of about 3 pounds of this mixture. 4-H members will learn of this opportunity during their February meetings. We will require the member's parents approval for this project. Feed patches should be sown in May or early June.

* * * *

It will soon be time to put up bluebird houses. With the several warm days that occured over the weekend, pairs of bluebirds will begin looking for places to nest. Remember that bluebird houses should be put on posts or poles in the open and not more than about 6 feet off the ground. We will again cooperate with J.E. Sears & Co. in offering bluebird houses to 4-H members.

ANDY SCRUGGS (left), president of the Appomattox County Volunteer Rescue Squad, and Ray Noble, squad captain, admire the "Crewman of the Year" plaque awarded to Susan Godsey (center) at the recent Appomattox County Volunteer Rescue Squad awards banquet. (Photo by Bill Sherrod)

THINK TANK STUDENTS simulate local government proceedings and arguments in a recent special project.

READ ALL THE NEWS

Appomattox Assembly to meet

The Assembly will meet in regular session on Thursday, Feb. 3 at 7 p.m. in the AMS Annex.

All members are urged to be present for the first reading of the **Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws.**

Final report on Candy Sales are to be made at this time. The committee for the 4-H Club Educational Center Talent Show, scheduled for March 25 has a few more spaces unfilled. Those interested should call Thomas A. Chilton, 352-2284 or the Extension Office, 352-8244. All entries must be in by February 10 so the program can be arranged.

This event, sponsored by the Assembly for benefit of the 4-H Club Educational Center, now has tickets on sale: Adults - $1.50, Under 12 - 50c.

Local students learn of government

Sixth grade Think Tank students at Appomattox Elementary School have been involved in a simulation designed to acquaint students with their local government and some of the problems a community faces.

Students became citizens of the city of Riverstream. Their first task was to elect a town government. Students filed petitions for office, made campaign posters, gave speeches and elected a mayor and five town council persons.

After hearing arguments and debates from angry citizens the town council passed ordinances on dog control and a new swimming pool to be built.

Since re-election the citizens of Riverstream now have a female mayor. Two members of the format council were re-elected. The new council has been involved with pollution controls for industries, bicycle ordinances and a recent hearing on slum housing.

A planning commission is attempting to zone newly annexed land. Students are enjoying analyzing issues, and attempting to find solutions for these problems.

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Food stamp rules change

Some elderly and disabled persons who receive food stamps qualify for special provisions and additional benefits under new food stamp eligibility rules that took effect Feb. 1, the Virginia Department of Social Services announced today.

The first rule affects eligibility for food stamp payments as a separate household. Currently, parents age 60 or older who live with adult children are allowed to receive food stamps as a separate household only if they purchase and prepare their food separately from their children.

As of Feb. 1, separate household food stamp payments are also available to disabled parents receiving Supplemental Security Income, Social Security disability or blindness payments, Veterans benefits for total disability, and surviving spouses or children of disabled veterans who receive VA benefits, if they purchase and prepare their food separately.

In addition, separate household eligibility is also available to anyone age 60 or older who is too disabled to purchase and prepare his own food if he or she lives with others whose income is below 165 percent of the poverty limit.

The second rule expands food stamp eligibility for certain special provisions for aged and disabled household members.

These special provisions allow the food stamp eligibility of certain households to be based on net household income with no maximum placed on the amount claimed as shelter deduction. All medical expenses over $35.00 a month may also

(Continued on page 7)

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•Washington CORN MUFFIN or CORN BREAD MIX ..... 4 oz. PKG. $1.00
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